



# Backcountry Camping

## Death Valley National Park



Death Valley National Park's backcountry has a variety of rugged mountain and desert

terrain. More than 3 million acres of wilderness and over 400 miles of backcountry dirt roads

are open to camping under the following regulations:

### Permits:

◆ **Free voluntary permits** for backcountry camping may be obtained at the visitor center or any ranger station. Solo hikers may want to provide additional information about plans and emergency contacts.

### Where you *can* backcountry camp:

◆ **Backcountry camping is allowed** *two miles* away from any developed area, paved road, or "day use only" area. Camp only in previously disturbed areas and park your vehicle close to the roadway to minimize impact.

◆ Backcountry campsites must be more than **100 yards from any water source** to protect these fragile areas for wildlife use.

### Where you *can not* backcountry camp:

◆ **Camping is not allowed on the following "day use only" dirt roads:**

- ◆ Titus Canyon Road
- ◆ Mosaic Canyon Road
- ◆ West Side Road
- ◆ Wildrose Road
- ◆ Skidoo Road
- ◆ Aguerberry Point Road.
- ◆ Cottonwood Canyon Road (first 8 miles only)
- ◆ Racetrack Road (from Teakettle Junction to Homestake Dry Camp)

◆ **Camping is not allowed at the following historic mining areas:**

- ◆ Keane Wonder Mine
- ◆ Lost Burro Mine
- ◆ Ubehebe Lead Mine

Camping should be avoided near all mining areas for personal safety.

◆ **Backcountry camping is not allowed on the valley floor** from Ashford Mill in the south to 2 miles north of Stovepipe Wells.

◆ **If in doubt** whether an area is open to camping please check at the nearest Ranger Station or the Furnace Creek Visitor Center.

### Large groups:

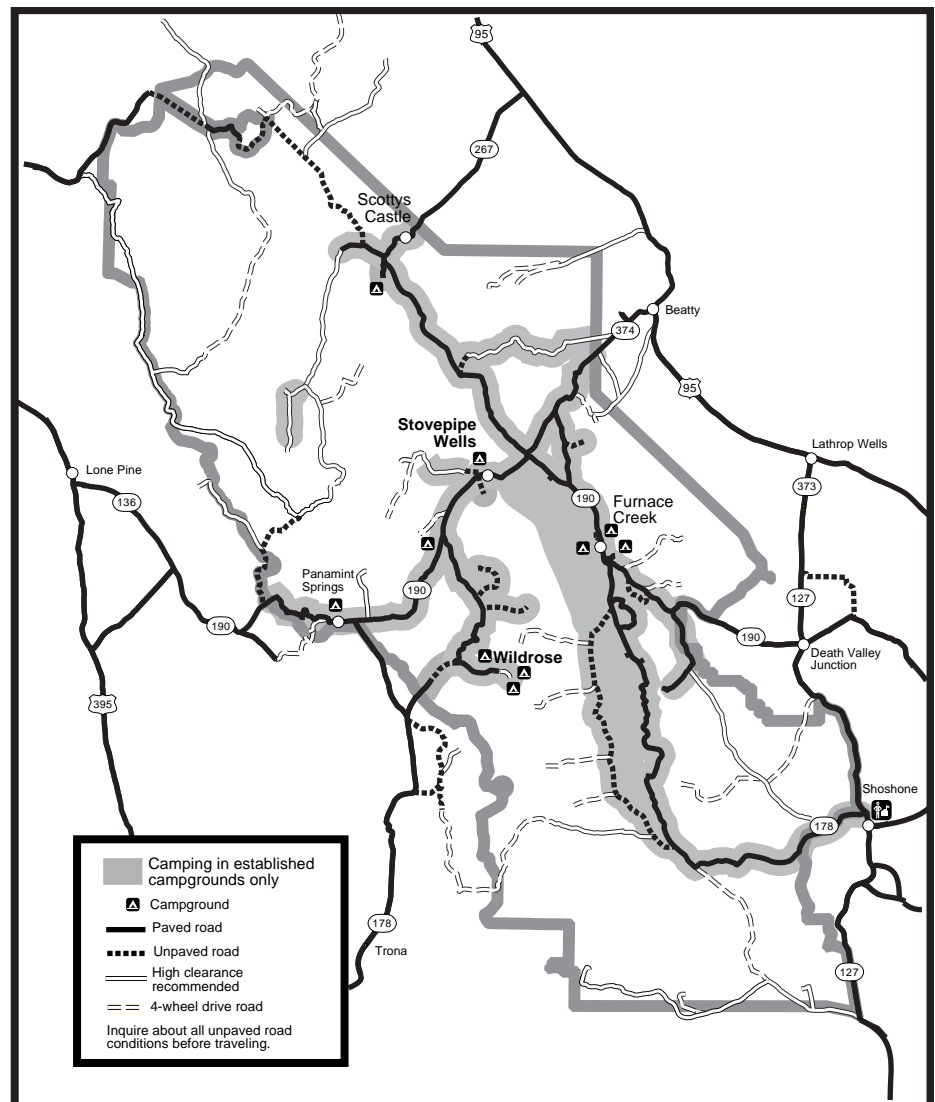
◆ **Overnight group size** is limited to 15 people and no more than 6 vehicles. Larger groups will need to split up and camp at least 1 mile apart.

### Campfires:

◆ **Campfires are prohibited**, except in fire pits in developed campgrounds.

◆ **Gathering wood is unlawful** and burning of wood is not allowed in the backcountry.

◆ **Campstoves and barbeque grills are allowed.** Charcoal ashes must be packed out.



# Park Regulations

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In addition to those on the previous page, the following regulations help protect the park.

It is your responsibility to know and abide by the park regulations.

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## Park Resources:

- ◆ **Removal or disturbance of rocks, historic artifacts, plants, or animals is prohibited.** Death Valley is considered an "outdoor museum"; please leave the park undisturbed for others to enjoy.
- ◆ Please **respect all private property** including the many patented mining claims in the park.
- ◆ The use of **metal detectors** is prohibited.

## Off-Road Driving:

- ◆ **Driving off roads is prohibited.** The desert environment is extremely fragile and slow to recover from vehicle damage.

## Wilderness

- ◆ **The wilderness boundary** is 50 feet from the center line of most backcountry dirt roads. Only foot or horseback traffic is allowed within the park's wilderness.

## Mountain Bikes:

- ◆ **Bicycles are allowed** on paved and dirt roads and the bike path near the Furnace Creek Visitor Center.
- ◆ **Bikes are not allowed off roads**, on trails, on closed roads, or in the wilderness areas of the park.

## Horses:

- ◆ **Horse use is allowed** *except* in developed campgrounds, on paved roads and interpretive trails. Water and forage is scarce, so grazing is not allowed. Use of weed-free feed is encouraged.

## Wildlife:

- ◆ **Feeding all wildlife is prohibited**, including coyotes, roadrunners, & ravens. When wild animals are fed by humans they tend to depend upon this "unnatural food source" rather than forage for their natural diet.

## Pets:

- ◆ **Pets are permitted** in developed areas and on park roads. They **must be leashed** and restrained at all times. Owners are responsible for clean-up of pet feces.
- ◆ **Pets are not allowed** off roads, on trails, or in the wilderness areas of the park.

## Garbage:

- ◆ **Pack out all garbage.** If you can pack it in, you can pack it out! Do not bury garbage. Wild animals will dig it up as soon as you leave.
- ◆ However, do **bury human waste** at least six inches deep, more than 200 yards from any water source.

## Weapons:

- ◆ **Weapons are strictly prohibited.** This includes firearms, air guns, bow and arrows, slingshots and other similar weapons.

# Backcountry Safety

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## Hazards:

- ◆ In winter, the higher elevations are cold enough that snow and ice conditions may require special safety equipment.
- ◆ Do not enter mine shafts, tunnels, or buildings.
- ◆ Watch for rattlesnakes, especially near old structures and vegetated areas near water.
- ◆ Hantavirus--a potentially fatal disease--is spread through the feces, urine and saliva of rodents. Avoid disturbing or camping near rodent burrows or dens.
- ◆ Do not camp in dry washes or drainages due to possibility of flash flood.

## Trails:

- ◆ Death Valley National Park has few maintained trails and no established campsites in the wilderness.
- ◆ Since most hiking here is cross-country, it is important to hike on areas where your footsteps will have the least impact. Trampling of vegetation, fragile soil crusts, aquatic habitats and animal burrows should be avoided.

## Maps:

- ◆ Detailed maps are necessary for many hikes in Death Valley National Park. Topographic maps are available at the Furnace Creek Visitor Center or by phone from the Death Valley Natural History Association (760) 786-3285.

## Water:

- ◆ Since springs may be dry or contaminated, plan to carry your own water or stash it ahead of time.
- ◆ During hot spring, summer and fall months, **one gallon** of water or more per person per day is needed.
- ◆ Heat and very low humidity create extreme dehydration potential during summer. We do not suggest low elevation hiking in Death Valley National Park between May and October.